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**DOWNLOADING INTERNET CHILD PORNOGRAPHY LANDS
CRENSHAW COUNTY MAN IN FEDERAL PRISON FOR SEVEN YEARS**

MONTGOMERY, ALABAMA— Joseph Byron Walden, 49, of Dozier, Alabama, was sentenced earlier today to serve 84 months in federal prison for downloading child pornography over the internet, Leura G. Canary, United States Attorney for the Middle District of Alabama, announced. The sentence comes after a federal jury sitting in Montgomery convicted Walden of knowingly possessing and receiving child pornography last November and represents the culmination of an investigation and prosecution that have spanned nearly a decade.

Walden first came to the attention of law enforcement in 2001, when the Dallas Division of the Federal Bureau of Investigation began investigating a series of inter-related child pornography websites on the internet. To gain access to the websites, all users were rerouted to a website called "Site-Key" where they were required to enter certain personal identifying information, including a credit card number. The FBI subsequently learned that an internet account and credit card number assigned to Walden had been used to gain access to three of the illegal websites earlier that year.

From 2003 to 2006, FBI agents in the Middle District of Alabama attempted to locate Walden and verify his identity through subpoenas and surveillance, but due to a shortage of resources, the investigation stalled. Then in May 2006, the FBI obtained a court order to monitor Walden's internet use and subsequently caught him visiting additional child pornography

websites. Based on what they had seen, the FBI sought and obtained a search warrant for Walden's residence, as well as all of his computers, which they executed in November 2006.

During the execution of the warrant, agents discovered child pornography print-outs in Walden's bathroom, as well as a digital camera containing photographs of a known child pornography series. They also seized four computers, which were forensically examined by the FBI's Information Technology Center in Pocatello, Idaho, and found to contain approximately 4,500 images and 44 videos of suspected child pornography.

Walden's collection consisted of both genders and a mix of ages ranging from infant to 17 years old, either posing nude or engaged in graphic sex acts. Although many of the files had been deleted, much of the illicit material was found still saved on Walden's computers. Computer examiners found a long history of child pornography browsing activity on the internet, beginning in 2000 and continuing right up until the night before the search warrant was executed. There were also indications that in 2006, Walden installed and ran evidence eliminating software on at least one of the computers.

The National Center for Missing and Exploited Children was able to identify many of the children depicted in the images and videos that Walden downloaded. One of the child victims, now 19, submitted a written victim impact statement to the court describing how the continued circulation of her abuse causes constant trauma and anxiety: "Every day of my life I live in constant fear that someone will see my pictures and recognize me and that I will be humiliated all over again. It hurts me to know someone is looking at them—at me—when I was just a little girl being abused for the camera. I did not choose to be there, but now I am there forever in pictures that people are using to do sick things. I want it all erased. I want it all stopped. But I am powerless to stop it...."

Attorneys for three of the children have submitted restitution requests on their behalf. They are seeking compensation for treatment and counseling costs, lost wages, and other costs associated with their online victimization. A date for the final restitution hearing has not been set.

In addition to his term of incarceration, Walden's sentence also requires him to pay a \$25,000 fine, to register as a convicted sex offender, and to spend the remainder of his life on supervised release.

This case was brought as part of Project Safe Childhood. In May 2006, the U.S. Department of Justice launched Project Safe Childhood, a nationwide initiative to combat the growing epidemic of child sexual exploitation and abuse. Led by United States Attorneys' Offices, Project Safe Childhood marshals federal, state and local resources to better locate, apprehend and prosecute individuals who exploit children via the Internet, as well as to identify and rescue victims. For more information about Project Safe Childhood, please visit www.projectsafechildhood.gov/.

The investigation of this case was conducted by agents with the Federal Bureau of Investigation, with assistance from the United States Department of Homeland Security. The case was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorneys Nathan D. Stump and Brandon K. Essig.